Tabb cagers get sweet revenge on Grafton
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YORK TOWN CRIER

THE POQUOSON POST

February 2 - February 8, 2006 | YORKTOWN & POQUOSON, VIRGINIA | Price: 50 cents

In Brief

Providence plans seafood dinner

The United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women of Providence United Methodist Church, 113 Old Dare Rd., will jointly sponsor a Seafood Dinner, Friday, Feb. 17th, 5 to 7 p.m.

Menu: Fried fish, shrimp, scallops, baked beans, slaw, corn bread, dessert and beverages. Cost is $12 for adults, $6 for children.

Admission by tickets only. Contact Delma Bristow 898-3922 or church office 898-9160 for tickets.

Net proceeds will benefit child cancer treatment.

Tabernacle UMC to start Pioneers

Tabernacle United Methodist Church announces the start of the Pioneer Club for boys and girls from first through fifth grades.

The Pioneer Club will meet every Wednesday night from 6:15 - 7:30 p.m. beginning February 8.

Tabernacle UMC is located at 831 Poquoson Ave, Poquoson.

For further information, contact Cindy Banek, 868-6842.

York meetings now on demand

York County's government cable channel, WYCG-TV 46, is now offering on-demand county meetings on the Internet as part of the County's website, www.yorkcounty.gov.

This new service will bring archived and indexed on-demand streaming of Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission meetings to anyone with a computer and access to the World Wide Web.

The Board of Supervisors' regular meetings, work sessions and Planning Commission meetings will be available for one month after the scheduled meeting date.

The meetings will be indexed by agenda item.

Viewers can click on the item to directly access that portion of the meeting.

The new service is in addition to the live streaming already offered by WYCG-TV 46.

Channel 46 programming on the web may be reached by logging on to www.yorkcounty.gov and then selecting WYCG on the home page.

Go Italian with GHS club

The Grafton High School Interact Club is hosting a benefit dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 7, beginning at 5:45 p.m., in the school cafeteria.

Carrabba's Italian Grill is catering the event which will raise money for the club's international project, a day-care center in Kenya.

The menu includes appetisers, a Caesar Salad, Chicken Marsalla and Penne Pomodoro. Tea and water are included and desserts will be available at an additional cost.

Reservations are required and can be made at 358-0964.

A minimum number of reservations is required, so sign up now.

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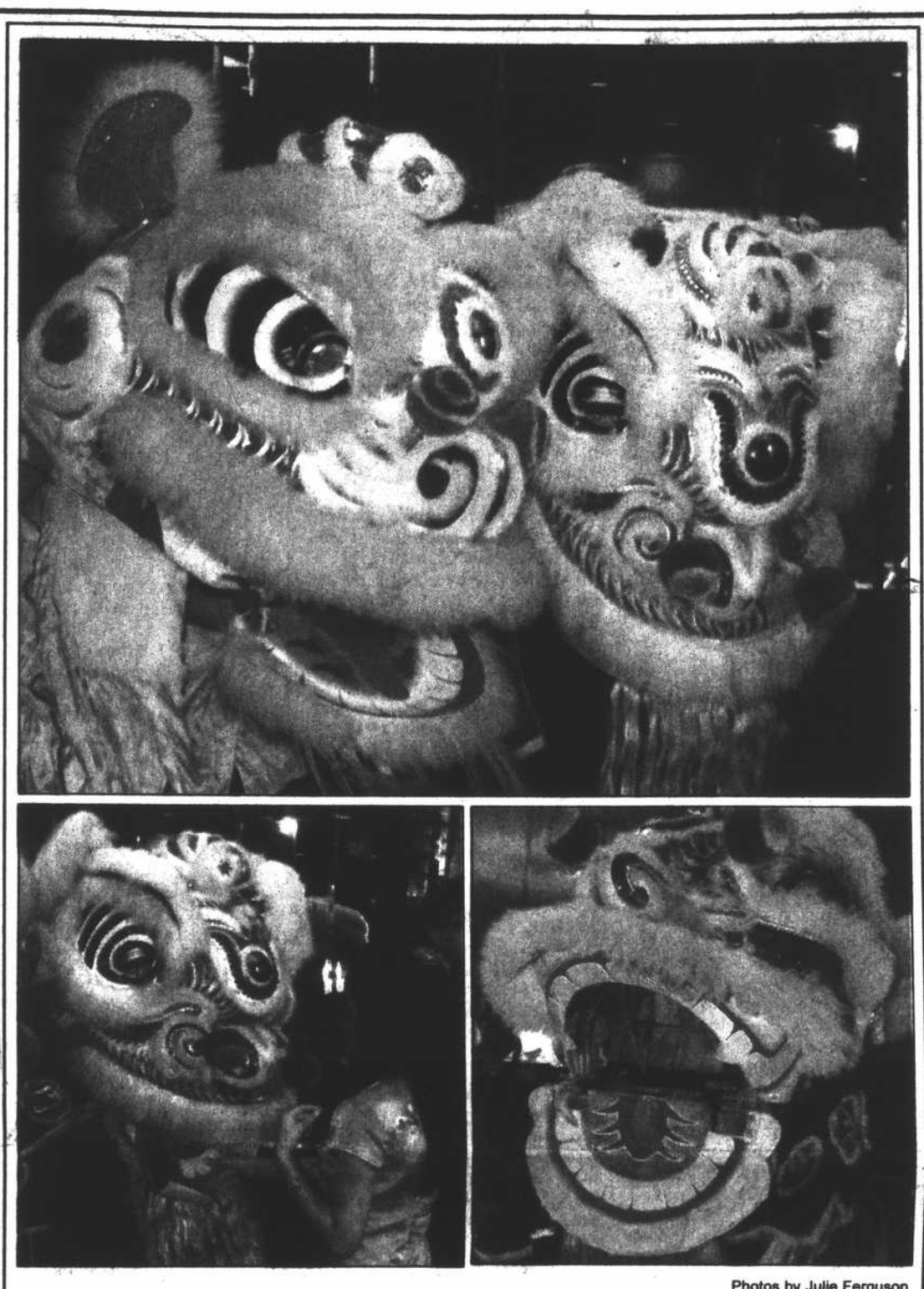

Photos by Julie Ferguson

Happy New Year

January 29 marked the official beginning of the Chinese New Year, and Spring Garden Restaurant in Tabb got a day's head start on the celebration of the Year of the Dog. On Friday night, Spring Garden hosted members of the Jow Ga-Kung Fu-Tai Chi Association of the United States who performed the traditional lion dance for a room full of appreciative diners. At top, the yellow lion and the white lion line up. Above, left, a woman places a red envelope in the white dragon's mouth. Red envelopes traditionally contain monetary gifts. Above right, the white dragon opens wide.

Poquoson helps Katrina victims in Mississippi

By Beth Meiser
Staff writer

Gordon Helsel certainly believes in the people who believe in him.

The Mayor of Poquoson knew if he asked the people of Poquoson to support an effort to help victims of Hurricane Katrina that they would respond positively.

He just didn't know how positive that response would be.

Memories of the destruction in Poquoson wrought by Hurricane Isabel prompted Helsel to send a letter to residents of Poquoson last year.

"Each of us vividly remembers the life changing scenes of despair and loss," Helsel wrote on September 5, 2005.

"Isabel had hardly left our City before monetary donations began to flood City Hall. These donations were paramount as we began the recovery process," Helsel wrote.

"Because we in Poquoson have received such generous assistance from various cities and organizations throughout the country, I believe that we, as a City, should assist those who now are totally dependant on help from others."

In the letter, Helsel indicated that there were a number of suggestions as to how donations might be spent, but not matter which avenue was chosen, "all donations will be used to benefit Hurricane Katrina victims."

"The citizens of Poquoson are strong, kind and compassionate people and I know you will agree with the following plan to assist those who have lost everything."

The citizens of Poquoson did agree - very generously, Helsel said.

The city wound up partnering with a small city right outside Pascagoula, Miss. There's a substantial senior population in the city and "it's still a shambles," Helsel says.

He called the city administrators and asked what the area needed.

"Sheet rock," was the definite answer.

So, Poquoson put its donations into buying sheet rock. And, the donations went farther than might have been expected when Joe Taylor of Taylor's Do-It-Centers sold the project the sheetrock at cost.

Poquoson bought an entire tractor trailer load of sheet rock which was delivered late last year.

With the amount of devastation suffered in the Mississippi town, that load of sheet rock wasn't enough. There wasn't enough money left in the Poquoson kitty to purchase another full trailer of sheet rock - so the Kiwanis Club of Poquoson made up the difference and the city was able to send another load of sheet rock to Mississippi.

It's also sending Helsel and City Manager Charlie Burgess down for a first-hand look-see. The two men are going to Mississippi this week.

"We'll assess what else they need and send crews, equipment or whatever they need down there to help out," Helsel says. "We want to go there, to meet the people and let them know Poquoson will help in any way it can. We know they're on the road to restoring their city, but they have a long way to go."

Already, "Poquoson has made a lot of elderly people very happy," Helsel says.

And that's made the Mayor of Poquoson happy, too.

"I'm elated and proud to serve people like this," Helsel adds.

York Chamber committee takes on traffic woes

By Beth Meisner
Staff writer

Traffic.

Ask just about anyone who has to travel local roads these days and they'll tell you the traffic is a nightmare.

There's too much of it.

Some routes make little or no sense.

It devours time, talent and plenty of gasoline is converted into exhaust while drivers wait in traffic that sometimes resembles a parking lot.

Traffic and some possible solutions to its problems are on the agenda of the York County Chamber of Commerce's newly formed Transportation Committee. So far, the committee consists of Paul Garman, Tim Meyer and Al Meadows.

"But, we're looking for more members - both for the Chamber and this committee," says Garman, who heads up the trio. "We want folks to join the Chamber and to work on this committee."

The group "doesn't want to reinvent the wheel," especially in light of Gov. Tim Kaine's emphasis on transportation needs throughout the Commonwealth, Garman says. Committee members believe the governor and the General Assembly will turn their attention to major roads like the interstate and major arteries.

"We can partner with them, but our major concern will be to look at York County, at its needs, problems and solutions," Garman says. "We don't want the state to get to the secondary roads and forget us."

To that end, the committee is looking at traffic problems that not only impact on commerce and industry, but on the quality of life for residents of the county.

The Virginia Department of Transportation has a number of different budgets that fund maintenance and new road construction, Garman explains.

"They have different pots (of money)," but funds can be switched around if there's a good reason.

"In general, I don't think we're going to be able to build another Route 17 in York County," he says.

"Twenty years ago that might have been possible, but not now. We need to look at what we have and improve on it to keep the flow going."

He sites short-term solutions like the realignment of Burts Road and Grafton Drive as a small start.

"It gets some traffic off Route 17," Garman says.

The committee is looking at Victory Boulevard which is already scheduled for widening. Managing and improving traffic is an "ongoing matter of locating specific areas of concern and taking those issues to the York County Board of Supervisors.

That body can then go to VDOT with proposals, suggestions and requests, Garman says.

"Everyone knows there's a problem, but many of the solutions are so far apart."

Anyone interested in joining the Chamber and/or serving on the Transportation Committee can contact Garman at Mid-Atlantic Commercial - Poquoson realty at 867-8777.

PPD officers get inside look at meth labs

By Beth Meisner
Staff writer

"Know the enemy," some wise man said sometime long ago.

So, when the enemy is a nationally growing problem with methamphetamine, a.k.a. crystal meth, other wise words come to mind immediately.

"Knowledge is power."

Poquoson Police Chief Jack White wanted to arm his department with the knowledge they need to fight this particular front of the war on drugs. So, the Poquoson Police Department sponsored a training class to familiarize officers with what to look for when conducting investigations into suspected drug dealers.

"Crude, homemade laboratories for manufacturing methamphetamine are a growing problem all across the United States," White notes. "The ingredients for making meth can easily be purchased from local stores by anyone, but when these normally safe ingredients are mixed together or kept in close proximity to each other, the results are dangerous toxic vapors and explosive chemicals," White adds.

White invited two hazardous materials officers from the Virginia Department of Emergency Services to conduct two, hour-long classes. They "demonstrated how easy it would be to manufacture meth in the kitchen, garage or just a plain old shed in the back yard," White says.

Twenty of Poquoson's police officers attended the recent sessions where they were trained what to look for and what safety precautions to take when a suspected lab is discovered.

Officers Richard Parker and Wade Collins explained that destroying one of these homemade labs requires considerable personal protective gear and is a job for specially trained and equipped haz-mat officers, according to White.

Parker and Collins had pictures and videos of recently discovered labs that had been set up in apartments and mobile homes. Entire buildings and portions of trailer courts have to be evacuated as a safety precaution when the labs are being disassembled and destroyed.

In addition to the police officers, several members of the Poquoson Fire and Rescue Department attended the classes.

"Firemen and medics frequently have occasion to enter residences where one of these labs could be in operation." White says. "They need to know what to look for and what safety precautions to take."

White stresses that no meth labs have been discovered in Poquoson - and emphasizes "yet. It will happen," he predicts.

"And when it does, the Poquoson Police Department wants to be prepared."

As another anonymous wise man once said, "forewarned is forearmed."

Courtesy photo

From back, Poquoson officer Greg Peck, Va. Haz-Mat officer Richard Parker, PPD Officer Greg Deaver and Wade Collins, also a stage haz-mat officer. He's showing the local officers how everyday ingredients can be used to make methamphetamine in home labs.